

Message Text

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14

ACTION OPIC-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 EB-07 /020 W
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R 012220Z APR 76
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4346
INFO USDOC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY QUITO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BOGOTA 3357

STATE PLEASE PASS TO OPIC

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: EVIN CO
SUBJ: OPIC SEMINAR, MARCH 17

REF: STATE 048254, QUITO 2184

1. OPIC SEMINAR WAS HELD IN BOGOTA ON MARCH 17, 1975, AT THE CLUB DE EJECUTIVOS. CO-SPONSOR OF THE SEMINAR WAS THE PRESTIGIOUS "ASOCIACION NACIONAL DE INDUSTRIALES" (ANDI) WHICH PROVIDED INVALUABLE SUPPORT IN THE PREPARATIONS AND DURING THE SEMINAR.
2. OVER 200 KEY INDIVIDUALS FROM PRIVATE INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT WERE INVITED TO THE SEMINAR, BASED ON A JOINT MAILING LIST DEVELOPED BY ANDI AND THE US EMBASSY. OF THESE INVITEES, 48 COMPANIES CONFIRMED RESERVATIONS, AND 34 INDIVIDUALS ACTUALLY CAME TO THE SEMINAR.
3. ON TUESDAY NIGHT, MARCH 16, THE DCM, ECON COUNSELOR, AND ASSISTANT COMMERCIAL ATTACHE HAD DINNER WITH THE OPIC SEMINAR GROUP. THE OPIC OFFICIALS EXPLAINED THE ESSENCE OF THEIR PRESENTATION WHICH OCCURED THE NEXT DAY.
4. THE SEMINAR BEGAN AT 10:00 AM WEDNESDAY AND PRESENTATIONS WERE MADE BY ALL THE SEMINAR TEAM. THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOGOTA CHAPTER OF ANDI SERVED AS MASTER OF CEREMONIES. MOST SEMINAR

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PARTICIPANTS SEEMED ATTENTIVE, AND INTEREST WAS SHOWN BY THE NUMBER

OF QUESTIONS ASKED.

5. DURING THE LUNCH THAT FOLLOWED THE PRESENTATIONES, OPIC GENERAL COUNSELOR GERALD MORGAN ADDRESSED THE GROUP CONCERNING OPIC.

6. AFTER LUNCH, ONLY 5 INDIVIDUALS MET WITH OPIC OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND THESE DISCSSIONS WERE VERY GENERAL IN NATURE.

7. A PRESS RELEASE WAS ISSUED BY ANDI, HOWEVER, ONLY ONE PICUTRE APPEARED IN THE NEWSPAPERS THE FOLLOWING DAY. A USIS PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER TOOK PICTURES DURING THE SEMINAR AND THESE PHOTOS WILL BE FORWARDED TO OPIC AND THE AGRIBUSINESS COUNCIL.

8. VARIOUS HIGH-LEVEL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAD BEEN INFORMED PERSONALLY BY THE OPIC ADVANCE OFFICER OF OPIC'S PLANS TO INITIATE A PROGRAM OF DIRECT FINANCING AND GUARANTEES AND THESE INDIVIDUALS WERE INVITED TO THE SEMINAR. NEVERTHELESS, NO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ATTENDED THE SEMINAR. THESE GOC OFFICIALS GAVE VERBAL APPROVAL OF THE INITIATION OF OPIC'S FINANCE PROGRAMS IN COLOMBIA AND IN PERSONAL INTERVIEWS SHOWED INTEREST, HOWEVER, CONSIDERING THAT NOT ONE GOC OFFICIAL CAME TO THE SEMINAR, AND BASED ON THE LOW TURNOUT FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY, IT CAN BE CONCLUDED THAT THERE EXISTS LITTLE INTEREST IN COLOMBIA FOR OPIC'S FINANCE PROGRAMS.

9. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED COPIES OF THE NEW OPIC COUNTRY LIST AND WE HAVE NOTICED AN ERROR. THE BROCHURE MENTIONS THAT OPIC'S INSURANCE PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE IN COLOMBIA. INSURANCE IS NOT, REPEAT NOT, AVAILABLE IN COLOMBIA BECAUSE OF THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT'S UNWILLINGNESS TO SIGN A BILATERAL SUBROGATION AGREEMENT. THIS HAS BEEN POINTED OUT TO OPIC MANY TIMES IN THE PAST.
VAKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SEMINARS, MEETING REPORTS, SOCIAL RECEPTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BOGOTA03357
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760126-0179
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197604110/aaaadqgu.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION OPIC
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 48254, 76 QUITO 2184
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 JUL 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <26 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OPIC SEMINAR, MARCH 17
TAGS: EINV, EFIN, CO, OPIC, ANDI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006